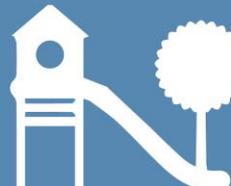


Council news round-up

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This week's news from around the Council.

- **Coronavirus (COVID-19) update**

The impact of the coronavirus pandemic in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent has prompted the county's public and emergency services to declare a major incident in response to the unprecedented demand for multi-agency activity. This is now beyond the scope of business-as-usual operations and is in recognition of the level-4 incident declared by the NHS this week. Declaring a major incident now is a way of ensuring that all public sector agencies and partners work together, share resources where necessary, and better anticipate and deal with the challenge of stopping the spread of coronavirus. Click [here](#) to read more.

As of Friday 27 March 2020, 121 cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) have been confirmed in Staffordshire.

- **Useful websites and apps**

[NHS website](#) - updated on a daily basis with the latest information and guidance.

[GOV.UK](#) for the latest information and advice from the Government.

[The Department of Health and Social Care](#) - gives a breakdown of case by NHS region.

[PHE dashboard](#) - gives a detailed breakdown of cases by upper tier local authority.

[Q&A from Public Health England on coronavirus.](#)

[Every Mind Matters](#) - expert advice and top tips on how to look after your mental wellbeing.

[GOV.UK coronavirus information service on WhatsApp.](#)

- **Stay at home, Protect the NHS, Save lives**

Following the Prime Minister's briefing on Monday night, Public Health England launched a new campaign to encourage people to stay at home in order to protect the NHS and save lives. This campaign is running across TV, radio, digital and social channels and local authorities are sharing the messaging through their communication channels too. The messaging reinforces the importance of social distancing measures that we should all be taking to reduce social interaction between people in order to stop the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

The advice from Public Health England and the Government is that people should stay at home and that you should not meet others outside your household, even friends and family. You

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should always stay two metres (six ft) apart from other people and should only leave your home for the following reasons:

- Shopping for basic necessities, for example, food and medicine, which must be as infrequent as possible.
- Travelling to and from work if you absolutely cannot work from home.
- To provide care or to help a vulnerable person.
- One form of exercise a day, for example, a run, walk, or cycle - alone or with members of your household.

This advice is likely to be in place for some weeks.

- **What to do if you have symptoms?**

If you have either a high temperature or a new, continuous cough, the advice is to stay at home for 14 days. Do not go directly to your GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital. You do not need to call NHS 111 to go into self-isolation. This action will help protect others in your community while you are infectious. While most people will have a mild illness, some older people or people with weakened immune systems or with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease may experience severe illness and we need to protect them.

If your symptoms worsen during home isolation or are no better after seven days, contact the NHS **111** online coronavirus service at <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19/>
Only call **111** if you cannot get help online.

- **Prevention**

It's important keep undertaking prevention measures to help reduce the risk of catching or spreading coronavirus. Please continue to follow the advice from Public Health England and the NHS.

- Wash your hands more often and for at least 20 seconds. This is particularly important after taking public transport or when you get home or arrive at work.
- Use soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze.

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- Put used tissues in the bin straight away and wash your hands afterwards.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in the home and work environment.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell.

• Key developments at South Staffordshire Council this week

- The Council Offices in Codsall remain closed to the public and earlier this week closed to staff too. The Leisure Centres in Cheslyn Hay, Codsall, Penkridge and Wombourne are closed but Baggeridge Country Park remains open although the play area, tea shop and Lydiate Room are closed.
- Council meetings - as an interim measure to protect Members, all non-essential, non-decision making meetings and events have been postponed or cancelled. The Council meeting scheduled to take place on Tuesday 31 March 2020 remains in the diary at the moment and we are hopeful that an alternative way of holding this meeting will be available.
- Guidance and advice continues to be added to the new section about coronavirus on the Council website. This week, advice was added about benefits and Council Tax as well as information for businesses and food businesses. This section is being updated regularly with new pages. Visit www.sstaffs.gov.uk/coronavirus to find out more.

• Update on council services

- Waste and Recycling - All ancillary services are working as normal and there is daily contact with Staffordshire waste officers, disposal sites and contractors. Residual and recycling weights up 10% from normal garden waste levels and are very high for the time of year. Some local authorities have suspended their garden waste and bulky waste collections. Biffa is working very hard to maintain our high service standards.
- Street Scene - All operations are currently being undertaken despite some staff off self-isolating. We have seen a number of large fly-tips within the district this week but the team have responded fantastically.

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- Environmental Health and Licensing - Guidance has been produced for pubs and restaurants looking to change their business model and diversify into providing takeaways and deliveries of meals. In addition, the new COVID-19 Bill requires us to enforce the closure of pubs and non-essential businesses.
- **Council offices closed**

Residents should use alternative ways of contacting the Council rather than visiting in person. 'My Account', the Council's online facility, gives residents online access to council services 24/7 from the comfort of their own home and you can register or access it at www.sstaffs.gov.uk/myaccount. Click [here](#) to find out more about getting in touch with the Council.
- **NHS call for volunteers**

The Government and NHS are looking for volunteers to help up to 1.5 million people who have been asked to shield themselves from coronavirus because of underlying health conditions. For more information, visit: <https://www.goodsamapp.org/NHS>. NHS Volunteer Responders are not intended to replace local groups helping their vulnerable neighbours but to be an additional service provided by the NHS.
- **Community safety - warning about coronavirus scams**

Cyber criminals are targeting individuals and organisations and unfortunately a number of scams have started to circulate that are associated with coronavirus. Some messages look real but they're not so please be careful. We've also heard that fraudsters are also using free school meals as a way of obtaining bank account details or payment promises. Please be on your guard and don't click on links or attachments in suspicious messages. Click [here](#) to see an example.
- **Activities to entertain the kids (and adults)**

[Baggeridge Country Park](#) - the park's popular Facebook page will be posting wildlife pics on a regular basis and there's a promise of a virtual pond dip and bug hunt.
[10 minute core workout](#) - the Council's Leisure Centres will be posting on their Facebook pages too and sharing videos and home workouts. Check this one out from instructor Chris Allcott.
[Pete McKee's cartoon workshop](#) - lessons every Wednesday at midday.
[BBC History for kids](#).

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[Science Bob.](#)

- **Recipes using store cupboard ingredients**

And finally! A few links to websites with recipes for meals made from store cupboard ingredients.

<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/guide/top-10-storecupboard-recipes>

<https://www.jamieoliver.com/features/14-store-cupboard-meals/>

<https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/uk/food/food-reviews/g551529/store-cupboard-recipes/>

<https://www.mumsnet.com/family-food/recipes-for-storecupboard-heroes>

<https://www.asdagoodliving.co.uk/food/amazing-meals-made-from-store-cupboard-staples>

Everyone is encouraged to submit news items, please email: comms@sstaffs.gov.uk